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ABSTRACT

This report presents the recommendations of a committee that was formed to explore the possibility of using cable television networks as a method of delivering extension education programs to urban audiences. After developing and testing a pilot project that used cable television as a mode to disseminate horticulture and 4-H leader training information, the committee concluded that cable television is an acceptable delivery mode that should be used in addition to, but not as a substitute for, other methods of providing extension education. Multiple viewing times within one week and evening hours were found to be important. Extension staff were urged to investigate the availability of cable television resources in their own areas and explore the possibility of sharing resources among counties, districts, and states. Some staff members resist making television programs because they consider the practice too time consuming and expensive. Inservice training is necessary to demonstrate the effective use of cable television as an information dissemination mode, to make teachers aware of the implication of emerging telecommunications technologies for informal youth and adult education, and to teach the design and production of cable television programs. Programs developed in the future should have a single, one-shot focus, and programs in a series should be independent of each other. Program marketing techniques should be developed on an individual county basis and should focus on cable subscribers. (MN)

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CABLE TELEVISION

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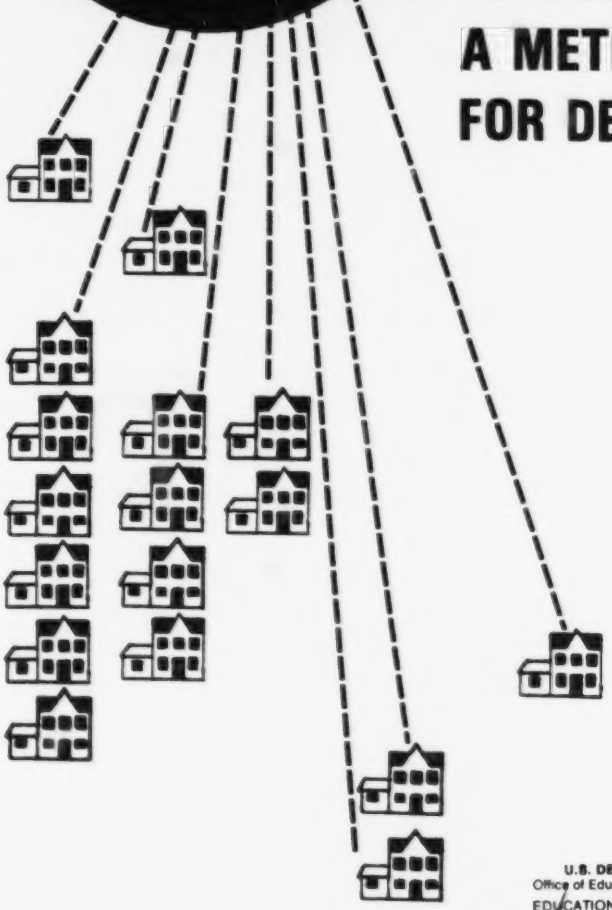
A METHOD FOR DELIVERING INFORMATION



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Cable Television: A Method for Delivering Information is a condensed version of the final report submitted to the Director of the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service by the "EduCable Study Committee" in May, 1983. The following major sections are included:

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Conclusions and recommendations	2
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Evaluation of 4-H leader training series	23

The report may be used for background information by Cooperative Extension staff and other groups or individuals who are exploring the possibilities of using cable television as an information dissemination mode. The data on which the information is based is included in the complete report.

Limited copies are available. However, any portion of the report may be duplicated for utilization in committees.

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CABLE TELEVISION: A METHOD FOR DELIVERING INFORMATION

Advances in telecommunications are offering the possibility of new methods to deliver information directly to home television receivers. At the present time, cable companies are developing and expanding at a rapid rate in urban communities across the country and throughout Nebraska. These companies are generally one-way broadcast information systems with provisions for local programming to the community on one channel designated for public access. Therefore, it appears logical for the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) to explore the possibility of utilizing cable networks as a method of delivering information to urban audiences.

Establishment of Committee

On March 15, 1982, Dr. Leo Lucas, Dean and Director of the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service, appointed a nine-member EduCable[1] Study Committee of CES staff and a representative from the Nebraska Educational Television Network (NETN). The committee included county staff from the geographic areas where EduCable is currently being transmitted.

The committee task was to develop and test a pilot project utilizing cable television as an information dissemination mode for the Cooperative Extension Service. The primary objectives defined by Dr. Lucas were:

1. Review the most logical subject matter areas and recommend one or two program areas for the pilot project.

2. Develop material specifically for a pilot project.

3. Plan an effective merchandising program so a high percentage of the potential audience would know about the programs.

4. To conduct a specific and precise evaluation of the program effort. This evaluation should include the evaluation of the techniques, as well as the impact of the programs on the appropriate urban clientele.

[1] EduCable, as defined by NETN, is an adult continuing education program service of NETN distributed through the Lincoln and Omaha cable television systems. For the purposes of this project, the term EduCable is defined more broadly to include any CES access to cable systems.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions and recommendations, which were presented May 2, 1983 to Dr. Lucas from the EduCable Committee, were based on:

1) An assessment of the project by the committee members which included their reactions to the project and how they felt staff reacted to it.

2) The telephone survey about the series which was aimed toward the general public.

3) The committee's understanding about the projections for cable and the new technologies impacting these projections.

Overall Generalizations

Conclusions

There are viewers in the general public. Through the sampling techniques utilized in the evaluation, 114 viewers were located who watched one or more of the horticulture series.

Cable television is an acceptable delivery mode which should be used in addition to, but not as a substitute for, other methods.

Delivering programs via cable television is a viable option. Build on the experience of this project and produce additional programming for cable distribution.

An advantage of utilizing cable television is that Extension specialists and/or Extension agents can present the information.

The leadership for utilizing a cable system can originate with the county, district, or state staff. It would be most effective if it originates from county or district staff. However, effective utilization of cable as a delivery mode would require sharing between counties and support services from Extension specialists.

Recommendations

Extension staff should be encouraged to consider cable television as a delivery system to their clientele (primarily the urban or small town residents).

Counties with larger urban centers should consider EduCable or available public access channels on their local cable system as a primary delivery system.

Cable Television as an Information Dissemination Mode

Conclusions

Multiple viewing times within one week are important and evening hours are the most attractive times.

Cable television is available only to urban or small town residents which have a cable company.

It is not known how available the cable system is for utilization by the public in various counties. The opportunities for local programming will vary according to the cable company serving the community.

Some of the problems in working with the cable companies may include:

-- Many of the cable systems are 'pass-through systems' and do not have equipment for local programming.

-- It is cumbersome to work with cable companies access procedures.

-- It appears the degree of interest in local programming varies with the different cable companies.

Recommendations

Each District Director and/or Extension Agent-Chairman explore how the cable companies in their area operate and what the possibility is for local access.

Consider programming a consistent weekly time slot on the cable system which is sponsored by the CES. This would also allow for repeats of programs at appropriate times throughout the year.

Explore how resources (programs) might be shared between counties, districts, and states.

Staff Reactions

Conclusions

There is a resistance to making television programs by some staff. They appear to feel:

-- it is too time consuming.
-- priorities should be put other places.
-- budgets are tights and there is no money to use.
-- the cable audience is not large enough to justify the expenditure in time.

The staff is not prepared educationally to utilize television as an information dissemination mode.

Recommendations

An inservice training program be developed for the entire staff which would focus on:

1) Cable television as an information dissemination mode.

2) Effective utilization of cable television.

   -- working with the cable company in their county.
   -- what can be done at the county level.
   -- broad understanding of producing programs.
   -- how to work with viewers (individuals, small groups, large groups, etc.) to get it effectively used in the county.
   -- marketing.
   -- supplementary materials.
   -- measuring the consequences.

3) The emerging technologies in telecommunications and the possible implications for informal youth and adult education.

Provide opportunities for inservice training for a limited number of staff which would focus on designing and producing television programs.

Staffing Needs

Conclusions

Resources will need to be developed to support a television delivery system. At the state level, support staff as resources for county staff would include:

1) Someone who could focus on writing, designing, and visualizing programs.

2) Someone who could focus on production quality.

3) Access to a regular film crew.

Question

Utilization of cable television could impact on job requirements. Do individuals who are hired in the future need some formal training which provides a degree of understanding about designing and producing via the television medium? Or, should a mechanism exist for inservice training in this area for appropriate staff?

Programming for Cable -- General Public

Conclusions

Viewers generally watched one program.

Demographic information must be interpreted cautiously because of the program content. However, in general, the program viewers appear to be in the middle socioeconomic class.

Cable programming tied to printed materials might provide an effective approach to informal adult education.

Recommendations and Suggestions for Future Trials

Develop programs with a single, 'one-shot' focus. Programs in a series should be independent of each other.

Future programming might focus on a single session which is pre-recorded and played at multiple times. A portion of the program might be offered 'live' and give viewers time to telephone an Extension specialist/agent with specific questions for the topic.

Use printed materials along with the program. This might include information individuals can request in the form of free literature. Explore using printed aids in the form of a workbook, program guide, newspaper questionnaires, etc.

Explore combining television programming with other delivery methods (small group meetings, county events, state events, etc.)

Explore additional ways to utilize the materials produced such as:

-- developing a videotape library in the county offices so individuals or groups could check out the tape for use at home.

-- converting the data to other sources such as the microcomputer.

Question

Is there exploration needed in regard to identifying ways to reach people who are not in the middle socioeconomic class?

Programming for Cable -- Specific Audience

Conclusions

General

-- The percentage of the targeted audience of 4-H leaders with cable who watched the programs was low.

-- A majority of both viewers and nonviewers indicated they would be more likely to watch a 4-H leader training on television than to attend a meeting for the same information.

-- No demographic differences appeared to exist between viewers and nonviewers.

-- A significantly larger number of viewers had previously attended 4-H leader training than had nonviewers.

Viewers -- in general, indicated:

-- they watched the program for the content subject matter and because they had 4-Hers enrolled in the project.

-- television was a more convenient way to attain leader training information than were meetings.

-- personal interaction with Extension agents and other 4-H leaders is important to the 4-H leader.

-- the format and content of the programs were good.

-- television leader training was effective and should be used more in the future.

-- the programs increased their interest in receiving more information via television rather than attending meetings.

Nonviewers, in general, indicated:

-- the primary reasons they did not watch the programs were:

a) no one in their club was taking the project, and
b) they planned to watch, but forgot.

Recommendations

1. 4-H leaders, both viewers and nonviewers, have a positive attitude toward information dissemination via television. The task ahead is to identify the most effective avenues and to capitalize on this interest.

2. Cable television is a good vehicle for communication of content applicable to a wide audience. However, targeting to a specific audience must be planned with care. Even within the target group, many of the individuals will not watch because a) the content is not of particular interest to them personally, b) of unfamiliarity with the delivery system, and c) of limited access to cable at this time. Cost effectiveness should be a consideration.

3. Consistent programming in an identified time slot would be best to develop a strong user group and to allow long-term scheduling for publicity and awareness development.

4. Resource materials developed for limited target audiences should be multi-purpose for maximum effectiveness through use in county and district resource centers, etc.

5. If used as part of Extension programming, such as leader training, the program must be integrated in the overall yearly plan.

Production

Conclusions

High quality production and utilization of innovative designs need to be stressed for effective programming.

Extension needs to focus on centralized production. This might include several counties cooperating on a project with input from Extension specialists or production at the state level which could be utilized by all counties.

Recommendation

Consider developing a process through which Extension agents could cooperate in identifying possible programs and how they can share in the development and production of programs at the state level.

Marketing

Conclusions

The most effective marketing techniques are those which focus on the cable subscribers and utilize the cable system:

-- Inclusion of a flyer in the cable company billing.

-- Cross-channel promotion on the cable system (30-second and 60-second spots).

Some limitations to advertising through the cable system include the cost of producing flyers to include in the mailing and the degree of cooperation from the manager of the local cable system.

Program marketing needs to be accomplished on an individual county basis.

All information about the programs should be in a form which can be kept for reference in the household and should include:

-- a short description of the program.
-- date and time.
-- television channel number.

Recommendations

Utilize the cable system for marketing the programs.

Although the most effective marketing techniques are through the cable system, the advertising approach needs to continue to utilize multiple sources. Emphasis should be placed on providing information about the program(s) in the television listings and other articles in local newspapers.

Future Activities to Consider

Conclusion

There are many changes occurring in the broad area of telecommunications at the current time. The CES needs to be actively involved in exploring ways to utilize the results of these changes in informal educational programs.

Recommendations

Explore the use of two-way informational services which utilize cable as the distribution mode (Cox in Omaha is testing INDAX at the present time).

Explore how the CES might utilize the VIDIPLEX system which is extending to Scottsbluff.

Explore possible uses of satellite technology.

COMMITTEE PROCESS

Objectives

The committee redefined the objectives in more specific terms as follows:

1. Produce a program(s) for Cable TV focusing on the uniqueness and advantages of this mode for information dissemination.
   a) Conduct a leader training series via Cable TV.
   b) Present a series of programs aimed at urban, middle-class adults.
2. Develop a program(s) utilizing techniques other than a basic lecture format.
3. Utilize Cooperative Extension staff in producing the program(s).
4. Develop a quality marketing program to promote the program(s) to assure the widest viewing audience possible.
5. Test the project on the EduCable TV channel in Bellevue, Lincoln, and Omaha.
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of utilizing Cable TV as an information dissemination mode.

To accomplish these objectives, the entire EduCable Committee met 10 times between April 5, 1982 and April 3, 1983. To complete the defined task, the committee was subdivided into five groups according to areas of expertise. These groups were:

-- 4-H Home Economics Leader Training
-- Adult Horticulture
-- Production
-- Merchandising
-- Evaluation

Additional CES staff served on subcommittees to plan the programs for the 4-H home economics leader training and the adult horticulture series. These subcommittees met at appropriate times in the planning process.

Review of Related Activities and Their Implications

Television Activities Within the CES

The Nebraska CES has utilized television in various activities since 1965. 4-H activities include "4-H TV Science Club," ten programs on emergency preparedness called the "4-H TV Action Series," a series with special emphasis on nutrition called "Mulligan Stew," and a series related to energy conservation and use.

Agricultural related uses include utilizing educational television to extend the University campus and its specialists to farmers in rural Nebraska. Three examples include "Pork Spotlight" (1969), "Beef Up For the 70's" (1971), and "The Farm and Ranch Report" (1982). Another program which has been aired for 30 seasons which also reaches urban audiences is called "Backyard Farmer."

Television Activities Used by Other Adult Education Programs

The University of Mid-America at UN-L provided post secondary education through telecommunications in which participants could obtain college credit. Continuing Studies at UN-L purchased broadcasting rights from commercial sources for mini series which ranged from six to eight programs. Those broadcast on EduCable in 1982 included "Time Management," "Flexible Reading," and "Home Landscaping and Gardening."

Several national commercial firms are developing materials to be sold to Cable companies. The USA Network from New Jersey is one example of a firm which is producing 'tip-type shows' as mini courses for adult audiences.

Uses of Cable Television in CES

Two states, Pennsylvania and Ohio, have used the cable system to transmit information to clientele. At Penn State, the University programs one cable channel which they call "Pennarama" and CES contributes to this programming. They sponsor already existing programs and are producing two new series in 1982. One series is called "Land Application" and is aimed at city planners. The other series is on nutrition and is directed to the general public.

At Ohio State, CES is also using existing videotapes and films on the cable system. In addition, they are (a) encouraging local agents to do programs and have the audience call in questions related to the topic; and (b) producing slide sets with a study guide which they transfer to videotape.

In Columbus, Ohio, the Warner Cable Company is testing an interactive system called QUBE. It utilizes touch pads for individuals to make responses while they are watching the program. Therefore, the CES within one county used this system to:

1. Provide an opportunity for individuals to request literature.
2. Allow the audience to select the program topic for the following week.
3. Conduct an energy survey.

Uniqueness and Advantages

Unique characteristics and advantages of cable television as a dissemination mode for CES were identified as:

1. Programs can run several times a week at different time of the day.
2. Programs are not limited to 30-minute time slots.
3. Cable television offers the possibility of programming to a wide urban audience.
4. It lends itself to local programming possibilities.
5. It offers the possibility of combining television programs with other aids such as workshops, newspaper questionnaires, etc.
6. It offers the possibility of combining television programs with small group meetings within the home or office setting.

Limitations

Limitations of cable television as a dissemination mode for CES were identified as:

1. Only those connected to cable can get the program.
2. The EduCable programming goes over the Omaha, Lincoln, and Bellevue systems at the same time.
3. People are not used to tuning into the EduCable channel -- they will have to find it intentionally.

Limitations (continued)

4. The utilization for a narrow, specific audience is limited.

5. Cable companies in Nebraska are all independent. Many do not provide the opportunity for local programming (see Appendix).

6. Production costs money!

Guidelines Established by EduCable Study Committee

Audience

The audience was defined as individuals in households which are receiving the services of Cablevision in Lincoln, Cox Cable in Omaha, and United Cable Television of Sarpy County. There are approximately 42,000 homes in Lincoln, 50,000 homes in Omaha, and 1,000 homes in Bellevue which are utilizing the services of their respective cable companies.

Program Selection

The committee defined broad guidelines as a basis for selecting the programs to develop. The guidelines were that:

1. The programs would be directed at an adult, urban audience.

2. The programs would be applicable to all three counties.

3. Two program series would be developed which would be composed of three half-hour programs.

4. The first series of programs would be directed toward the general public and relate to urban horticulture.

5. The second series would be directed toward a target audience within the Cooperative Extension Service. This series would focus on 4-H leader training within the home economics area.

6. The programs would utilize local Extension staff as resource persons on the TV programs.

7. The target date for airing the programs would be February, 1983.

The implementation of the process of producing, marketing, and evaluating the program was assigned to subcommittees.

Subcommittee Reports

Horticulture Subcommittee

Major task. The task of the committee was to develop three half-hour television programs that would interest the majority of the horticulturally involved public. Due to the date of airing, home landscaping and selection of plant materials were chosen as the subject matter base of the programs.

Three programs were produced with the assistance of Don Janssen, Extension Agent-Horticulture in Lancaster County; Mary Ross, Extension Agent-Horticulture in Douglas County; and Robert Woolman, Extension Agent-Horticulture in Sarpy County. Subject matter areas for the three programs were:

1. Basic Landscaping
2. Selecting Plant Materials
3. Solving Problem Areas in the Landscape

Time commitment. The total time commitment for the three programs was approximately 300 hours. Each segment required 80-120 hours to prepare the script, film the visualization, and prepare the final program. Six people were involved in the total production of the three programs.

Expenses. The program resource person spent a total of $120.00 for film supplies and processing. The total filming and production expenses are included in the production subcommittee report.

Observations. First, the cable television delivery system needs to have a total commitment from the agents and support personnel in the urban or participating counties. The demand for time and production involvement is so great that an EduCable program would surely fail without it.

Second, the development of an EduCable committee made up of representatives from all participating counties needs to initiate programming that can be developed and used by all counties involved. This would reduce the time commitment by any one county and yet benefit all counties with similar needs.

Third, if this program should become an on-going commitment, additional visual production staff may be needed. The visualization of the programs should not be a responsibility of the county staffs. This will be necessary to produce high quality programs.

Fourth, all staff involved in an EduCable production need to have basic training in television production. Many mistakes and wasted time can be eliminated with a training program. A training program would also eliminate some of the mystery surrounding this type of programming.

4-H Leader Training Subcommittee

Major task. The subgroup planned and prepared videotapes for the 4-H training segment of the overall pilot project. An initial meeting in July, 1982, was highly exploratory and involved wide ranging discussion on topics, procedures, purpose, etc. At the second meeting in October, 1982, the topic was narrowed to microwave cooking and the following decisions were implemented:

1. Target audience: 4-H leaders with spin-off to parents owning a microwave.

2. Objective: To teach 4-H leaders how to teach kids to use the microwave.

3. Title: "Kids in the Kitchen."

4. Number of programs: Three half-hour programs. The content was parallel with the leader's manual, but no overt references to the leaders manual was made. Topics for each program were:

   a) Introduction and vegetable cooking.
   b) Meat, eggs and cheese (proteins)
   c) Fruits and breads, plus evaluating the finished product.

5. Two youth-a boy and a girl - were selected to appear in the tapes.

6. The taping was completed at the Lancaster County demonstration/ meeting room.

7. Each county was responsible for arranging alternative training for leaders in their counties who did not have access to cable TV.

Laurel Branen, Extension Food and Nutrition Specialist, served as the resource person for all three programs. She developed an outline for each program, purchased necessary food supplies, arranged with a local retailer for the loan of a microwave oven, and assembled all cooking utensils necessary for the taping.

Time commitment. The Extension resource person on the three programs spent approximately 30 hours preparing for and taping the programs. However, the resource person had written the 4-H manual which she followed and did not prepare a written script.

The taping of the programs required two, eight-hour days. All segments of the programs which involved the children were taped the first day.

Expenses. Approximately $50 was spent on food. A microwave oven was loaned free of charge from a local retailer. The resource person provided many of the necessary cooking implements from her own kitchen.

The total filming and production expenses are included in the production subcommittee report.

Production Subcommittee

Major task. The major task was to cooperate with each of the subcommittees to prepare the programs and related materials for merchandising. Considerable time was spent in counseling on production approaches for the two series.

Four 30-second and one 1-minute spot announcements were produced for each cable system carrying the programs. The 30-second spots promoted a single series; whereas the 60-second spots promoted both. One 30-second spot was prepared for each series announcing the start date. The other 30-second spots were designed to be run during the series. The dates the 60-second spot could be used were between February 6 and 28. The spots were hand carried to the cable companies by the Extension agents.

Time commitment. The producer-director-editor of the series spent about 30 days on the projects. This includes the shooting and editing time for both programs and the spot announcements.

The production of the microwave series required two days shooting time and a week of editing time. From a production standpoint, this type of program was easy to produce. It was shot in one location and contained several interesting demonstrations.

"Home Landscaping in the 80's" required five days shooting time, of which two were field shoots. Three days were spent in studio doing introductions and transitions for the programs. In most cases, editing was accomplished while the specialist was in the studio.

Expenses. The total expenses for the two series were:

Supplies --	Panel for set	$ 54.92
	Design services	35.00
	Groceries	38.72
	Wall mural	73.29
	Hardware for set	9.61
	Videocassettes (18 KC-30,9 MBU45, 3 mini)	533.85
		$ 745.39
Travel		40.00
Equipment rental (Ag Comm)		2,320.00
Personnel --	Temporary (6 pay periods beginning Oct.) ... 158 hours	576.70
	M. Frost-Williamsen	142.50
	Total	$ 3,824.59

Problems and suggestions. The major problem for the Production Subcommittee occurred when an outside producer-director was hired for the outdoor shoots. She had not been involved in the discussions, and therefore the best outside footage was not obtained, reducing the quality of the series.

The primary suggestion for future programming is to have the Extension producer spend time with each specialist before shooting the program.

Marketing Subcommittee

Major task. The marketing subcommittee was the sales staff - its task was to promote the produce (the two series).

Early in the planning process, it was decided to emphasize two methods of getting information to the public. These were promotion spots to be aired on the cable systems carrying the program, and flyers to be inserted with the cable billings and/or distributed locally. Local publicity through newsletters, releases, etc. was to be handled by each participating county.

A flyer was designed in cooperation with Ag Communications. The size was determined by what could be stuffed in with the cable bills. Television channel numbers were not included on the flyer because they varied from county to county. The front side advertised the program. The back side was used as a request form for a pamphlet about landscaping.

Time commitment. The time-consuming duties included telephone calls, meetings, delivering flyers and spots, writing releases, and visits to cable companies. A rough estimate of the time spent on these activities by the subcommittees' three members is 220 hours.

Expenses. A total of 100,000 flyers were printed at a cost of $350.87. These were distributed as follows: Cox Cable Company, 45,000; Douglas, Lancaster and Sarpy counties, 10,000 each; miscellaneous, 25,000.

The marketing subcommittee also arranged for 30- and 60-second television promotions. The cost for these tapes through Ag Communications was approximately $45.00.

Marketing methods for each county. The marketing/promotion methods varied for each of the three counties. An outline of the methods used in each county is:

Lancaster:
- Flyers and articles in 4-H leader and family newsletters, home extension and home economics newsletters
- Flyers distributed through garden centers and county courthouse information bureaus
- Radio programs (four times)
- Recorded message on hotline
- Garden column
- News releases

Sarpy:
- Information in 4-H, home extension, home economics, and agriculture newsletters
- News releases
- Listing on cable television
- Personal letters

Douglas:
- Flyers in Cox Cable billings for Jan. 15 and Febr. 3
- Flyers and articles in 4-H, home economics (two), and horticulture newsletters
- Flyers distributed at garden centers, hardware stores, extension meetings, city-county health departments, kitchen equipment stores, and garden show
- Display at garden show at Omaha Civic Auditorium
- News releases
- Horticulture, 4-H and consumer columns
- Radio programs or spots (three)
- Recorded messages on hotline and teletip
- Listing on cable television
- Article in news service which goes to community organizations

Major problems. Throughout the process, several problems were encountered. These problems included:

1. Newspaper ads -- The World-Herald indicated they would not classify this project under the nonprofit organization ad rates. It appeared they did not view television as simply another method of delivering lessons.

2. Prior to developing the flyer, the cable company in Sarpy County indicated they would be willing to broadcast the program in the same time slots the programs were being broadcast in Douglas and Lancaster counties. However, at a later date, the cable companies in Sarpy County provided different time slots for the programs. This rendered all of the flyers allotted to Sarpy County to be unusable and other methods of promotion were required.

3. The biggest problem faced was promoting programs with such a variety of channels and times. Anything (such as the flyers) designed for use in more than one area could not be specific as to channel numbers, for example.

4. Some people apparently confused EduCable with the noncable educational channel, because several callers did not realize the offering was via the cable system.

EVALUATION OF HORTICULTURE SERIES

"Home Landscaping in the 80's," a series of three television programs, were each one-half hour in length. They were developed by the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service as a pilot project to test the utilization of cable television as an information dissemination mode.

The series was broadcast on Cox Cable in Omaha, Cablevision in Lincoln, and United Cable TV of Sarpy County in Bellevue. The series was aired on three consecutive weeks in February, 1983, and each program was shown four times during the week at different times of the day.

The evaluation focused on identifying viewers within the potential population and obtaining their reactions to the programs. The objectives were:

1. To obtain demographic information about the viewers.
2. To evaluate the marketing strategies.
3. To evaluate feelings about getting information via TV.
4. To identify how the viewer utilized information from the program.

A listing of NETV cable users (249 names randomly selected) and known "Backyard Farmer" viewers (189 names) were utilized to obtain a general idea about percentage of viewers within the community. Of these two groups, 88% of the names were contacted. From a listing of individuals requesting free literature (834 names), 500 were randomly selected for a telephone contact to identify viewers. Where there was not an answer or where individuals refused to answer, the listings were replaced with another name to obtain a 96% response rate.

Demographic Information

In the sample contacted, 7.7% of the NETV cable viewers and 5.2% of the "Backyard Farmer" viewers watched the program.

There were 743 requests for free literature from the flyer included in the Cox Cable billing prior to the airing of the programs; 18.5% of those requesting the flyer watched the program(s).

Demographic information about the viewing audience includes:

1) 53% were less than 44 years of age.
2) 37% listed primary occupations in the household as being professional or technical and 17.1% were retired.
3) 73.3% of the respondents had some education beyond high school.
4) the viewers were about equally divided according to yard size when it was described as being large or small.

Viewer Reactions

65% watched one of the three programs and 9% watched all three programs.

In 72% of the households, one person watched the program(s).

The primary marketing sources (excluding the flyer in the Cox Cable billing) through which viewers found out about the program were:

An ad on the EduCable channel (25%)
Cooperative Extension newsletter (21%)
Switching TV channels (16%)
An article in the newspaper (14%)
Television listing in the newspaper (12%)

The primary reason listed for viewing the program was, "I'm interested in improving my present landscaping" (63%).

Of the viewers, 20% said they watched a program more than once and 47% said they recommended the program to someone else.

Although the 9:30 p.m. time slot was the most popular (40%), the 12:30 p.m. and the 5:00 p.m. time slots were each viewed by about one-fourth of the respondents.

Over half (57%) would not make an effort to attend a meeting to receive the same information. However, 73% would make an effort to seek out landscaping information from a written source.

Of the viewers, 91% preferred watching TV rather than going to a meeting.

The respondents liked having the presentation by the local Extension agent. However, they would have liked to be able to ask questions.

Respondents indicated they gained knowledge about the topic and two-thirds felt they received two or three specific ideas to use.

About half (55%) said they view the need for landscaping differently.

Nearly three-fourths feel the programs helped them so they can communicate better with a sales person at a nursery.

Respondents felt they were able to apply specific ideas to their situation (67%) and that the programs helped them make some decisions about landscaping their yard (75%).

The programs helped 22% of the individuals solve a particular landscaping problem.

Nonviewer Response

Of the nonviewers, 14% recalled seeing the program advertised. The three sources most frequently identified were:

-- A flyer in the mail from the cable company (50%)
-- An article in the newspaper (26%)
-- The television listing in the newspaper (18%)

Viewer and Nonviewer Response

The viewers and the nonviewers from those who requested literature tended to use additional sources for horticulture information. Sources most frequently mentioned were:

-- Nursery or other commercial supplier
-- Magazines
-- Newspaper

About half (52%) used one or two other sources and another 30% used three or four additional sources.

Most of the respondents (92%) had heard of the Cooperative Extension Service or the Extension agent.

Conclusions

Over half the viewers were under age 44 and more than a third were in professional or technical occupations. The viewers tended to have education beyond a high school degree.

The majority watched one of the three programs and there was usually one person in the household viewing the program.

The viewers found out about the program by:

-- A mailing in the cable company's billing
-- An ad on the EduCable channel
-- By switching TV channels
-- An article in the newspaper
-- Television listing in the newspaper

The number of viewers increased by having the programs aired four different times of the day.

The viewers preferred watching TV rather than going to a meeting; however, they would have liked to be able to ask the agent questions.

Viewers felt the programs provided knowledge and ideas to use about landscaping. In particular, the program(s) helped them so they might communicate better with a salesperson at a nursery.

The viewers and the nonviewers who requested free literature tended to use additional sources for horticulture information such as:

-- Nursery or other commercial suppliers
-- Magazines
-- Newspapers

Most of the viewers and nonviewers who requested free literature had heard of the Cooperative Extension Service or the Extension agent.

EVALUATION OF 4-H LEADER TRAINING VIA CABLE TELEVISION

"Kids in the Kitchen: Teaching Microwave" was a three-part television series developed by the Nebraska CES as part of a pilot project to test the use of cable television programming directed at a specific audience.

The three programs were broadcast in three consecutive weeks of February, 1983, with each program being aired at four different times throughout the week. The broadcasts were on Cox Cable in Douglas County, Cablevision in Lancaster County, and United Cable TV of Sarpy County. The program was publicized in a variety of methods including Cooperative Extension newsletters and a flyer in the cable company billings.

The evaluation focused on identifying the potential for use of cable in reaching target audiences of the CES normally taught by other methods of information dissemination. The objectives were:

1. To evaluate the effectiveness, as reported by viewer leaders, of 4-H leader training information presented via EduCable.

2. To evaluate viewer opinions of the acceptability of receiving 4-H leader training via television versus a meeting format.

3. To evaluate viewer opinions on the techniques and content of the pilot 4-H leader training program.

4. To identify relevant characteristics and demographic data of the 4-H leader audience, both viewers and nonviewers.

The population for the study was 4-H leaders in Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy counties who had access to cable television. The 4-H leaders were identified by the Extension Agents in each county through a mailing which asked them about their access to cable television.

Questionnaires were mailed to 181 individuals. Two follow-up mailings were utilized to increase the percentage of responses to the questionnaires. The 75.7% (137 of 191) response rate included 11 viewers (8.0%), 110 non-viewers (80.3%), and 16 (11.7%) invalid questionnaires.

Caution: The small number of viewers limits the interpretation of the results.

Demographic Information

Both viewer and nonviewer groups were similar on the following traits:

-- working outside of the home
-- preschool children at home
-- years as a 4-H leader
-- number of club leaders and members
-- ages of club members

Thirty percent of the viewers had club members enrolled in the project while only 11.5% of nonviewers did.

Attitudes and Practices About 4-H Leader Training

A significant difference was found between viewers and nonviewers in their past attendance at 4-H leader training. 90.9% of viewers had attended in the past while only 61.8% of nonviewers had.

Eighty percent of viewers felt they would be more likely to watch a 4-H leader training program on television than to attend a meeting for the same information. 58.6% of the nonviewers indicated the same.

Nonviewers

Nonviewers indicated they did not watch the programs because a) they were not interested in the program content; and b) they had no 4-Hers enrolled in the microwave project.

Viewers

Viewers indicated they watched the programs because a) they were interested in the content for their own interest; and b) they wanted to learn new teaching methods for use with 4-Hers.

Four of the eleven viewers saw all three programs while seven watched only one.

Tuesday noon was the most frequently watched broadcast time.

All but one viewer saw the program(s) in their own home.

Nearly half of the viewers knew other 4-H leaders, members, or parents who viewed the program.

There was a tendency among viewers to agree that:

-- leader training on television was more convenient than going to meetings.

-- television leader training was effective and should be used more in the future.

-- personal interaction with leaders and Extension agents is an important element of leader training.

-- the length and timing of programs was fairly effective.

-- the program content was presented well and was appropriate.

-- their interest in receiving more information via television was increased.

-- their interest in 4-H leader training was increased.

Viewers generally expressed positive opinions about the content and techniques used in the programs and their relative effectiveness.

Conclusions

General

-- The percentage of the targeted audience of 4-H leaders with cable who watched the program was low.

-- A majority of both viewers and nonviewers indicated they would be more likely to watch a 4-H leader training on television than to attend a meeting for the same information.

-- No demographic differences appeared to exist between viewers and nonviewers.

-- A significantly larger number of viewers had previously attended 4-H leader training than had nonviewers.

Viewers, in general, indicated:

-- they watched the program for the content subject matter and because they had 4-Hers enrolled in the project.

-- television was a more convenient way to attain leader training information than were meetings.

Viewers, in general, indicated: (continued)

-- personal interaction with Extension agents and other 4-H leaders is important to effective 4-H leader training.

-- the format and content of the programs was good.

-- television leader training was effective and should be used more in the future.

-- the programs increased their interest in receiving more information via television rather than attending meetings.

Nonviewers, in general, indicated:

-- they did not watch the programs for two reasons:

a) no one in their club was taking the project, and
b) they planned to watch, but forgot.

EduCable Study Committee

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* Resigned

The Cooperative Extension Service provides information and educational programs to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or handicap.